

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.       A method of minimizing sticky keys in an electronic device having a body,  
2       circuitry, and a plurality of keypads, the method comprising the steps of:

3                   (a)     providing a protectant coating; and

4                   (b)     applying the protectant coating on surfaces on the keypad and on the  
5       body to prevent sticking between the mating surfaces.

1           2.       The method of claim 1 wherein the protectant coating comprises a hydrophobic,  
2       highly anti-wetting surface treatment.

1           3.       The method of claim 1 wherein the protectant coating comprises a  
2       fluoraliphatic polymer.

3           4.       A method of reversibly absorbing liquid penetrations into electronic devices  
4       having a body and circuitry, the method comprising:

5                   providing a protectant coating;

6                   applying the protectant coating on surfaces on the keypad and on the body to  
7       prevent sticking between the mating surfaces;

8                   providing an absorbent structure in sheet-like form; and

9                   placing the absorbent structure within the electronic device such that the  
10       structure covers the electronic circuitry to be protected.  
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1           5.       The method of claim 4 wherein the protected coating comprises a hydrophobic,  
2 highly anti-wetting surface treatment.

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2           6.       The method of claim 5 wherein the protectant coating comprises a  
3 fluoraliphatic polymer.

1           7.       A system for minimizing sticky keypads in electronic devices, the absorbent  
2 system comprising:  
3               a first protectant coating on critical surfaces of the keypad; and  
4               a second protectant coating on the mating surfaces to the critical surfaces of the  
5 keypad which are located in the body of the device; and  
6               a water-permeable top sheet, a hydrogel-forming core, and a back sheet, the  
7 combination of elements forming the absorbent structure having a defined thickness; wherein  
8 the absorbent structure is characterized by having formations that allow for access to and  
9 penetration of electronic and mechanical elements.

1           8.       The system of claim 7 wherein the first and/or second protectant coatings  
2 comprises a hydrophobic, highly anti-wetting surface treatment.

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4           9.       The system of claim 8 wherein the first and/or second protective coatings  
5 comprise a fluoraliphatic polymer.

1           10.      A method of minimizing sticky keys in an electronic device having a body,

2 circuitry, and a plurality of keypads, the method comprising the steps of:

3 (a) providing a protectant coating wherein the protectant coating comprises  
4 a fluoraliphatic polymer; and

5 (b) applying the protectant coating on surfaces on the keypad and on the  
6 body to prevent sticking between the mating surfaces.  
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1 11. A method of reversibly absorbing liquid penetrations into electronic devices  
2 having a body and circuitry, the method comprising:

3 providing a protectant coating wherein the protectant coating comprises a  
4 fluoraliphatic polymer;

5 applying the protectant coating on surfaces on the keypad and on the body to  
6 prevent sticking between the mating surfaces;

7 providing an absorbent structure in sheet-like form; and

8 placing the absorbent structure within the electronic device such that the  
9 structure covers the electronic circuitry to be protected.

1 12. A system for minimizing sticky keypads in electronic devices, the absorbent  
2 system comprising:

3 a first protectant coating on critical surfaces of the keypad; and

4 a second protectant coating on the mating surfaces to the critical surfaces of the  
5 keypad which are located in the body of the device wherein the first and second protective  
6 coatings comprise a fluoraliphatic polymer; and

7 a water-permeable top sheet, a hydrogel-forming core, and a back sheet, the  
8 combination of elements forming the absorbent structure having a defined thickness; wherein  
9 the absorbent structure is characterized by having formations that allow for access to and  
10 penetration of electronic and mechanical elements.